

DPI Primefact

Understanding Safety Data Sheets for Chemical Controls of Varroa

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Introduction

All chemicals have an accompanying document known as a Safety Data Sheet (SDS). This fact sheet aims to explain and help you to understand the information contained in an SDS. The SDS for products registered in countries outside Australia, for example New Zealand, may look slightly different to SDS's for products registered in Australia.

What is a Safety Data Sheet (SDS)?

An SDS provides detailed information about a hazardous chemical, including:

- the identity of the chemical product and its ingredients
- the hazards of the chemical including health hazards, physical hazards, and environmental hazards
- first aid measures
- safe handling and storage procedures for the chemical
- workplace exposure standards for airborne contaminants
- what to do in the event of an emergency or spill
- physical properties of the chemical, like boiling point, flash point and incompatibilities with other chemicals and

- transport information.

The information in an SDS is arranged under 16 headings to allow relevant information to be easily located by the person using the chemical. The 16 sections of an SDS are described in further detail below.

Why read the SDS?

Not all information about the hazards of a chemical or instructions for safe storage, handling and use may be provided on labels. Usually, the SDS will contain much more information about a hazardous chemical than appears on the label. The SDS will help you and your employees understand how to manage the risks of handling, using, storing, and disposing of the chemical.

Where do I get an SDS from?

From the supplier – an SDS must be provided free when you first buy the product or when you request one. If the supplier does not automatically provide an SDS, ask for a copy. If the supplier cannot or will not provide a compliant SDS, contact your local work health and safety (WHS) regulator.

Does the SDS comply with WHS Regulations?

To comply, the SDS must meet the following criteria. The SDS:

- Is about the chemical you received or are using (product/chemical name is the same on the label and the SDS)
- Is written in English
- Contains 16 separate headings
- States the name, address and business telephone number of the Australian importer or manufacturer
- If the product is registered in Australia, gives an Australian business telephone number to obtain further information in an emergency
- If the product is registered in another country and allowed for use by the APVMA, these details are more likely to appear on the permit
- Was prepared within the last five years

Remember the supplier should provide you with a compliant SDS. If they won't or can't then contact your local work health and safety regulator.

Keeping SDS in the workplace

In your workplace you must keep an up-to-date register of all hazardous chemicals used, handled, or stored available for all workers likely to use or be affected by chemicals. The register must also include the current SDS for each of these chemicals.

What information is on an SDS?

A compliant SDS contains the following 16 sections each with specific information relating to the chemical being used, handled, stored, transported, or disposed of.

All sections of the SDS are listed below, however critical sections have been expanded to provide more information.

Sections of an SDS

Section 1 - Identification:

The information in this section should be consistent with the label and identifies:

- The name of the product
- Approval numbers
- Use of the chemical (insecticide, fungicide, pesticide etc.)
- Contact details of supplier of the SDS
- Emergency contact phone number

Section 2 – Hazard(s) identification

The hazard information should be consistent with the information on the label and details:

- A toxicity classification using the Globally Harmonised System (GHS) of chemical ID, which classifies its harmfulness to workers, people, and the environment
- Hazard pictograms e.g.,



- Signal word e.g., CAUTION, HAZARDOUS etc.
 - Hazard statements e.g., Harmful to aquatic life
 - Precautionary statements related to the GHS classification about prevention, response, and disposal e.g., P273 Avoid release to the environment
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Section 3 - Composition and information on ingredients

If the chemical is a mixture, this section should provide the identity and proportions of hazardous ingredients in the mixture.

Section 4 - First-aid measures

Describes the necessary first aid measures to be taken in case of an accident and details:

- General advice e.g., contact National Poisons Centre
- What to do if product is inhaled, contacts skin, contacts eyes and/or is swallowed
- Acute and delayed symptoms
- Notes to physician

Section 5 - Fire-fighting measures

Gives specific information on fighting a fire involving the chemical, including the most suitable extinguishing media and other protective measures.

Section 6 - Accidental release measures

Describes what actions need to be taken if there is an accidental release or spill of the chemical to minimise adverse effects on people, property, and the environment.

Section 7 - Handling and storage

Contains details on how to handle and store the chemical safely to minimise the potential risks to people, property, and the environment.

Section 8 - Exposure controls and personal protection

Provides information on:

- Acceptable exposure standards/levels
- Control measures to minimise exposure
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Section 9 - Physical and chemical properties

Provides detailed information on the physical and chemical properties of the chemical. For example, appearance, odour, pH, flash point, melting/boiling point, or any other relevant physical data.

Section 10 - Stability and reactivity

Contains details of any hazardous reactions that may occur if the chemical is used under certain conditions and details of any incompatible materials

Section 11 - Toxicological information

Provides detailed information on the toxicological properties of the chemical (e.g., effect on skin, lungs, eyes etc.). This section is used primarily by medical professionals, toxicologists and WHS professionals.

Section 12 - Ecological information

Provides detailed information on the ecological hazard properties of the chemical.

Section 13 - Disposal considerations

Explains how the chemical should be disposed of correctly or recycled or reclaimed.

Section 14 - Transport information

Contains basic classification information like UN number and transport hazard classes and packing groups that relate to the transport of the chemical by road, rail, sea or air.

Section 15 - Regulatory information

Provides advice on international or national regulatory information specific to the chemical, that is not provided elsewhere on the SDS.

Section 16 - Any other relevant information

Provides any other information relevant to the preparation of the SDS, including the date of its preparation, a key or legend to abbreviations acronyms and references used.

Key Take Home Messages

1. An SDS provides detail that may not be on the product label
2. Always have the SDS available for reference
3. Follow the use, handling, storage, and disposal rules in the SDS
4. If in doubt check the label, if the information is not in the SDS

For more information on safety data sheets, visit: www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au and [model_code_of_practice_preparation_safety_data_sheets_for_hazardous_chemicals.pdf](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/model_code_of_practice_preparation_safety_data_sheets_for_hazardous_chemicals.pdf) (safeworkaustralia.gov.au)

Adapted by K.Lees from: Safe Work Australia- Understanding Safety Data Sheets for Hazardous Chemicals

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